

Response to Restriction Requirement
Application No. 10/642,657

REMARKS

The Examiner requests that Applicants select one of the following groups for prosecution on the merits:

Group I - Claims 1-5 and 8-10, drawn to methods for polishing a glass substrate using an abrasive liquid (claims 1-5 and 8), classified in class 451, subclass 36; a method of making a mask blank that further includes coating an optical thin film on the polished glass substrate (claim 9), classified in class 427, subclass 160; and a method of making a transfer mask by patterning the optical thin film on the polished glass substrate of the mask blank (claim 10), classified in class 430, subclass 5.

Group II - Claims 6-10, drawn to methods for etching a glass substrate using a liquid etchant to selectively remove impurities, such as metal particles (claims 6-8), a method of making a mask blank that further includes coating an optical thin film on the etched glass substrate (claim 9), classified in class 216, subclass 24; and a method of making a transfer mask by patterning the optical thin film on the etched glass substrate of the mask blank (claim 10), classified in class 430, subclass 5.

Group III - Claim 11, drawn to a method of patterning a semiconductor substrate by lithography through a transfer mask, classified in class 430, subclass 311.

Group IV - Claim 12, drawn to a glass substrate having a specified irregular surface, classified in class 428, subclass 141.

Group V - Claim 13, drawn to a mask blank comprising an optical thin film on a glass substrate, classified in class 359, subclass 359.

Group VI - Claim 14, drawn to a transfer mask having a patterned optical thin film on a glass substrate, classified in class 430, subclass 5.

In response to the Restriction Requirement **Applicants have elected Group I** (Claims 1-5 and 8-10) in the above-identified application for examination.

The election is made **with traverse as to two groups**, as explained subsequently. To the extent that the traverse does not apply to other groups, or is otherwise refused, Applicant reserves all rights under 35 U.S.C. § 121 to file a divisional application to the non-elected groups of claims.

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Basis for Traverse

Applicants have elected Group I. However, the election is made with traverse because Applicants respectfully submit that Group I and Group III should be examined together. These two groups are closely related because the subject matter recited in recited in Claims 1-5 and 8-10 belonging to Group I is highly pertinent to the subject matter recited in recited Claim 11 belong to Group III.

More specifically, Claim 10 relates "A method of producing a transfer mask" while Claim 11 relates to "A method of producing a semiconductor device". However, the semiconductor device recited in Claim 11 is made by using the transfer mask produced by the method according to claim 10. Accordingly, both Claims 10 and 11 have the same relevant subject matter. Any search would necessarily cover both claims and any consideration of patentability would necessarily involve the same limitations and the same issues.

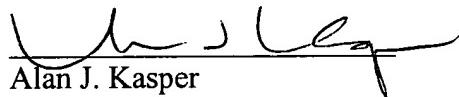
This situation is the same as that found in USP 5,942,356, which has been granted to Applicants. In this Patent "A method of manufacturing a phase shift mask" recited in Claim 24 and "A method of manufacturing a semiconductor device: recited in Claims 29-32 have been examined together. The same considerations in examining these two sets of claims would apply equally as well to the current groups I and III. **Reconsideration is respectfully requested.**

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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23373

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Date: May 27, 2005